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ABSTRACT

This paper begins by delineating common characteristics of nannies and indicating aspects of England's nanny training programs. The discussion then focuses on efforts begun in 1985 in Wisconsin to develop nanny training programs through the Vocational, Technical and Adult Education's post-secondary system. Particular emphasis is given to findings of a survey of 20 placement agencies in 14 states which attempted to determine the need for a training program. Responses indicated that a nanny training program could place 3,790 graduates trained in child care skills by 1987, and 4,445 graduates by 1990. Based on survey results and other indicators, 1-year Infant and Child Care Specialist and 2-year Child Care Associate training programs were developed by the Moraine Park Technical Institute. Development of the programs is described and elements of the new curriculum are briefly discussed. Subsequent discussion illustrates the diversity of curricular offerings in nanny training programs by providing information about training programs at three community colleges located in Oregon, Kansas, and New York. (RH)

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THE AMERICAN NANNY: OPPORTUNITIES, TRAINING AND PLACEMENT

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Presented by Dr. Jean Fleming at the American Home Economics Association annual meeting, June 29th, 1987, Indianapolis, Indiana

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THE AMERICAN NANNY:

OPPORTUNITIES, TRAINING AND PLACEMENT

For the purpose of this presentation, I have defined the American Nanny as the person, who, with training in the appropriate child care skills and knowledge of developmental stages, is employed to provide individualized care of a child or children in the child's home. The need for a Nanny arose from the increase in the number of dual career families and/or the number of single professional persons who have established a priority on providing quality in-home care of their children and/or who need the flexibility that in-home care can provide. A Time magazine article, The Child Care Dilemma, stated that in 1986, 9 million preschoolers spent their days with someone other than their mother. Elinor Guggenheimer, President of the Manhattan-based Child Care Action Campaign, while speaking at the 2nd International Nanny conference on June 12, 1987, predicted this number will rise. Few of these caregivers are trained Nannies.

Nannies come in all ages. Some are young women between the ages of 18 and 25, some with children; others are older women who have already raised their families and wish to continue working with young children. Some are high school graduates, others are acquired from the professions such as teaching, nursing or child care work. Not all Nannies live with the families. Some maintain their own apartments and work on a daily basis. Some families share a Nanny with children from two families being cared for in one household on a daily basis. This provides a

lower cost for child care and an opportunity for a child to have playmates in a supervised environment.

Dr. Deborah Davis, editor of the National Nanny Newsletter, once characterized the Nanny as one who "has specialized skills in child development, pediatric nursing, and early childhood curriculum so that she can perform as a teacher as well as monitor the child's health in the absence of the parent. She is skilled in all aspects of the child's care. . . . Typically, a professional Nanny contract includes the care of the children, the maintenance of the children's clothing, shopping for and preparing their food and cleaning their rooms and bathrooms".

Louise Davis, Principal of Norland Nursery Training College, Denford Park, Hungerford, England, in a presentation at the International Nanny Conference, described an ideal nanny in this way. "Foremost must be her ability to relate to the children. She must insure that they are cared for in a happy, safe and stimulating environment. She must be reliable, have fundamental common sense, be able to cope with emergencies whenever they occur, without panic or fuss. The real art is being able to put the skills into operation without threatening the family. The perfect nanny will not threaten the parent-child relationship, but will complement it. This ideal nanny will not abuse the priveleges of the employer's home when entertaining friends or using the telephone. (She is) absolute discrete and trustworthy." Later in her presentation she added knowledge of child development and other criteria. Training programs have existed in England since the establishment of Norland in the late 1800's; others have patterned their train-

ing after the English model. Norland's program is a two year plus nine months of practical experience in an in-home setting. The program prepares students for group care, in-home care and care of the child in the hospital. England's National Nursery Examination Board Certification assumes one of a high level of training and education for quality care. The NNEB was founded 40 years ago by an act of Parliment to promote training and certification of nursery nurses. It determines curriculum, indirectly affects faculty hiring, and writes and administers an annual national examination given to every NNEB candidate who completes the training in a private or public polytechnical school.

Training programs in the United States vary from short term, for profit, to short term university programs; from community colleges with one year diploma or certificate programs and two year associate degree programs to universities with a Nanny training component in their Early Childhood degree programs. The goal of all programs is to train the student in skills associated with the responsibilities of a Nanny; infant and child care, to stimulate creativity, and understand one's role in the family structure. The longer programs are able to train for additional depth including additional hours in an in-home practical experience.

Efforts in Wisconsin began in 1985 and have centered in the Vocational, Technical and Adult Education post-secondary system. In June, Donna Dixon, Home Economics Consultant at the Wisconsin VTAE Board working with Judy Herr, Home Economics Dept., U.W.-Stout, conducted a workshop for child care personnel. One session, on the Nanny, presented

Kay Emerson-Roy who had spent time at Norland, was aware of the NNEB and had established an associate degree program at Midway College in Lexington, Kentucky. Later, I spent two days at Midway learning about their program.

Establishing a new program in the VTAE system in Wisconsin is a three step process and includes surveying potential employers, developing a budget and developing curriculum. Moraine Park Technical Institute, one of 16 districts in the state, secured permission to develop a program and decided to survey placement agencies to determine the need for a training program. The sample was 42 agencies; 20 responded from 14 states which constituted a 48 per cent response. The results indicated that by 1987 they could place3790 graduates trained in child care skills and by 1990 they would need 4445 graduates. In addition, the results indicated that benefits included salaries of $200-400 per week plus room and board. Other benefits included FICA, paid vacation, use of family automobile, insurance benefits, travel with the family, and sometimes club membership or college tuition. Moraine Park was told that professionally trained and experienced Nannies can expect more than the above. Opportunities for employment exist primarily on the coasts. Ninety percent of those responding reported Nannies work a five day week and 50 per cent indicated a 10 hour day. Placement is often with a two career family or single parent with demanding careers who find quality care for children in their home best fits their individual work styles.

Additional responses to the survey questions pertained to the skills required of a person employed as a Nanny were catagorized as critically important, important and unnecessary.

Those skill areas judged to be of critical importance by 80 per cent or more of the respondents were:

- infant and child care
- CPR and first aid
- stimulate creativity
- understand one's own role in the family structure

Those areas judged critically important by 50 percent, but under 80 per cent were:

- explain child's development in physical, intellectual, emotional and social areas
- explain relationship of child's developmental stage to environment
- conduct creative learning activities appropriate to various age levels
- recognize common diseases
- deal with stress
- understand employer/employee relationships
- recognize importance of personal hygiene and grooming

Those areas judged as important by 50 per cent and over of the respondents were:

- care of sick children
- instruct child in manners and social graces
- plan for special occasions such as birthdays, trips to the museum, zoo, etc.
- abduction avoidance
- prepare nutritional snacks and meals
- care for child's environment
- housekeeping skills (child's area only)
- prepare family meals
- crisis and time management skills

Comments were numerous. Samples include: "training nannies (the) must difficult, complex task I have done", "teach people in practical terms and pride in professionalism", "experience as a Nanny is critical" "appropriate assertiveness necessary",

"salary negotiation skills very important" and include salary, defining duties, overtime and privacy in developing a contract.

Based on the results of the survey, and other indicators, Moraine Park proceeded with the development of a one year diploma program, Infant and Child Care Specialist, and a two year associate degree program, Child Care Associate. Competencies were selected from the survey, telephone conversations with agencies, the existing Child Care Services program, a Child Care Dacum study, and England's NNEB competency list. These competencies were later grouped into various courses and curriculum assignments or contracts written with various faculty.

Moraine Park had to decide on the similiarities and differences between training students to work in a child care center and in-home care. Some courses would remain the same: Child Development, Human Growth and Development, Guiding Children's Behavior, CPR and First Aid; others would need to be modified. Example: if a student is in trainingto work in a child care center, assignments would need to reflect activities, meal planning or care of a group of children. If the student is in an in-home training program, assignments must reflect working with one or two children.

Programs were designed so that courses could be stacked during the first year. The one year Nanny diploma program would include skills in child care, infant/toddler care, guiding children's behavior, nutrition and menu planning, creative activities, CPR and defensive driving, contract negotiations, family dynamics or interactions, personal and professional development, and 12 hours

per week of practical experience. Practical experience the first semester would occur in the child care center, the final 18 weeks would be in a home in the community. It was assumed that this student would remain in the midwest for his/her employment. It was further assumed that the associate degree student would leave the midwest and would need additional skills in cultural awareness of foods, etiquette, and varying lifestyles; housekeeping skills; tutoring elementary age children including meeting and interacting with elementary teachers; basic lifesaving and water safety; security percautions; and additional in-home practicum experiences in a variety of homes. Their future employment might require a greater degree of judgment in child care or care over an extended period of time without parential guidance. Electives in the program were identified as: Computer Applications, Exceptional Children and a three month summer internship course.

Just briefly then, here are some of the concerns which were identified to include in the new curriculum. In the area of family dynamics or interactions such things as:

define the role of the Nanny in the home
develop a positive working relationship
maintain confidentiality
establish guidelines on responsibilities to children in parent/nanny relationship
discuss communication techniques in working with children
establish a communication plan
discuss the Nanny's role to maintain stability for the child in family crisis situations such as illness, death or birth of a child
discuss various family situations such as divorce, single parenting, remarriage, step-parenting, child abuse and battered spouses
recognize the effect of grief or loss on the child

Students would need to be aware of the components of a written work agreement and that the agreement should be as specific as possible before employment. An agreement should identify:

duties of a nanny
hours an days of employment
overtime, holidays,
vacation--paid or non paid
benefits such as FICA, health insurance,
salary and method of payment
room and bath accomodations in live-in
entertainment of friends--when, when, restrictions
living arrangements--does the nanny eat with the family
light housekeeping for children's area
shopping for children's clothes, food, toys
cooking and laundry for children
length of contract
scheduled salary review, amount of pay increases
termination procedure, grievance procedure
trial period of employment
personal interviews and travel from one's home and return should the employment not be satisfactory

Students should anticipate making a personal committment of a minimum of one year to the employment situation. Depending on the age of the child, three years is appropriate.

At this point, I'd like to include information on other training programs of which I am aware. I'll include information on Lane Community College, Eugene, Oregon; Cloud County Community College, Concordia, Kansas; Sullivan County Community College, Loch Sheldrake, New York as well as references to others.

How do they differ? Different schools/states have different program requirements such as physical education, psychology, language, science, speech or English Composition. Some reflect the home economics program area more by including home management family income management, food preparation. Lane Community College includes Cultural Anthropology, Assertiveness Training, and Care

of the Sick Child. While in New York working with Tom Lambert we put together a program that looks different, but contains many of the same competencies. New courses were developed and additions made to existing courses. To fulfill a school requirement we selected biology; phy ed requirement could be filled with swimming, tennis or horseback riding, electives were World Culture, Music for Children, Music and Art Appreciation. New courses were called Manners, Etiquette and Ethics and Travel, Leisure and Security. FAmily Relations was strengthened to include the Nanny fitting into the family. Other courses in other schools include a foreign language, Marriage and the Family, Creative Cooking. Some programs place more emphasis on caring for the sick child and include a placement in a pediatric ward in trhe local hospital. Moraine Park's practicum occurs in the child care center with 9 weeks in each of the care areas, infant, toddler, 3-4 and 5-6 year olds. The second year is spent in in-home experiences with different ages of children and different sets of parents. The parent or parents are required to be present during this practicum. Lane Community College,based on the quarter system, requires students to spend a quarter in each of four child care centers, one quarter in a hospital and pediatric doctor office and one quarter in an in-home setting.

Linda Riepe, Lane Community College, requires her students to secure a passport, prepare a portfolio containing references, both personal and professional, a copy of their diploma, information about the training program. They also secure a navy blue uniform and wear striped aprons during their practicums.

Securing a position as a Nanny may be done through a placement agency, through the local school, by answering an ad in the local newspaper or through networking with those who are employed. It is important for the students to know as much about the family as possible and for this reason some school are requiring the students to develop an interest questionaire. Questions they might ask are: family biography including occupation of parent/ parents, names and ages of children, do the children have any developmental problems, how much traveling does the family do, religious preference, smoking or non-smoking, recreational activities, discipline techniques utilized, and their expectations of a nanny. If the student decides to work through an employment agency they should know the screening process used by the agency, do they conduct personal, not telephone interviews, and what are the guarantees provided to the family and nanny. Additionally, they should know if the agency is bonded, what procedure is used to check references, does the agency provide a support system for the Nannies to include orientation to the city, social activities and on-going training once the nanny is on the job. Barbara Lukas, Nanny instructor for Moraine Park, requests such information from a placement agency before she will refer students to them.

Criteria for a successful placement is a good "match" of nanny and the employer. Louise Davis, Norland, recommended that we develop classes for parents to help them to know what their job is! Expectations should be well defined and consistent, communications

to review successes and problems should be on-going, and a professional attitude maintained by both parties. All things being acceptable, nannies should expect to make a committment of at least one year.

One final comment concerning program development. Often people ask if securing approval for the program was difficult and how or what suggestions we can make to help others. The local district board and state consultant were very supportive. Others had to be convinced that training people to work in someone's home as a child caregiver is a viable, acceptable, well paying profession. Another objection was to the title "nanny", hence the use of Child Care Specialist and Child Care Associate. Other training programs are being called Professional Nanny. There is concern among the educators that the trained Nanny is identified from the untrained person; placement agencies are using the term interchangable and the consumer needs to identify with the trained person.

Instructor credentials are highly important. In Wisconsin in the VTAE system, child care instructors must have a B.S. or B.A. degree with emphasis on pre-school education. Qualified Nanny instructors with a college degree and NNEB certification may be hard to find, but that is what I am recommending to schools that I work with.

The Second International Nanny Conference was held at Scripps College, Claremont, California June 10-13th. Dr. Deborah Davis was elected President of the emerging International Nanny Association. The conference was an opportunity for those directly involved with the Nanny profesion to meet and interact together.

Those attending were nannies, employers, trainers and placement agencies. The goals of the conference were to share information, develop ways to raise public awareness about the value and worth of quality in-home child care and the nanny's role in the family, and to define minimum training standards and curriculum competencies for in-home caregivers. The confernce focused on common problems, recruitment of nannies, credentialling, appropriate standards and defining the organizational structure. Thirty separate sessions presented by professionals in the field of nanny training covered aspects of training, placement, curriculum concerns and business practices. One objective of the International Nanny Association is to affiliate with NAEYC or other accrediting nationally recognized organization. Nannies are being encouraged to apply for membership in NAEYC and to acquire personal insurance through the organization.